

Minutes of the MassBay Community College Board of Trustees Meeting – 8:00 am to 10:00 am Tuesday, March 4, 2025, by Webex and YouTube

Trustees Present: Diane Schmalensee (Chair), Tobey Choate, Alfonso Hidalgo, Matt Kahn, Sandy Lish, Rebecca Negreli, Ilissa Povich, Wendy Vincent

Trustees Not Present: Teddy Choi, Gary Prado, Lili Silva

Trustee Hidalgo departed the meeting at 9:00 am.

Guests Present: David Kennedy, MassBay Foundation Board member

Staff Present: Yvonne Anthony, Senior Director of Grants Development; Steve Baccari, Comptroller; Michelle Biscotti, Associate Director of Development; Liz Blumberg, Vice President for Student Development; Liz Borg, Capital Campaign Director; Karen Britton, Executive Director and Board Liaison, Office of the President; Lauren Curley, Director of Procurement and Business Operations; Lynne Davis, Dean of Health Sciences; Joe DeLisle, Director of Facilities; Phil DiBlasi, Director of Public Safety; Marcus Edward, Vice President for Finance and Administration; Catherine Gildae, Assistant Dean for Institutional Effectiveness; Courtney Jackson, Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost; Nina Keery, Dean of Humanities and Social Sciences; Henry Lopez, Director of End User Services; Mike Lyons, Chief Information Officer; Lisa MacDonald, Associate Dean for Equity Assurance; Sue Maggioni, Assistant Provost; Alison McCarty, Associate Dean of Admissions; Lynn Moore, Chief Diversity Officer; David Podell, President; David Protano, Dean of Automotive Technology; Hannah Sevia, Dean of STEM; Lisa Slavin, Vice President for Enrollment Management; Jeremy Solomon, Vice President for Institutional Advancement, Marketing, and Communications; Halye Sugarman, Dean of Business and Professional Studies; Richard Williams, Associate Dean for Student Success and Strategic Initiatives

CALL TO ORDER & INTRODUCTIONS

Chair Schmalensee called the meeting to order and declared that a quorum was present.

FEBRUARY 4, 2025, MEETING MINUTES

MOTION: Trustee Vincent moved to approve the minutes of the February 4, 2025, meeting, and Trustee Lish seconded the motion.

The motion passed via the following roll call vote: Trustee Choate – YES; Trustee Hidalgo – YES; Trustee Kahn – YES; Trustee Lish – YES; Trustee Negreli – YES; Trustee Povich – YES; Trustee Schmalensee – YES; Trustee Vincent – YES

EXECUTIVE REPORTS

Board Chair

Chair Schmalensee reported that the Board's recent self-assessment survey has resulted in changes to the format of the Full Board meetings, starting with today's meeting. She turned over her report to President Podell to explain the change to the Finance section. President Podell reported that an ad hoc Self-Assessment Committee met to review the results of the Board's survey, which indicated that not enough time of the monthly Board meetings is spent on academic programs and student services, and all of the items from the monthly Finance and Administration

meetings are repeated. The recommendation is that only essential finance items be addressed in the monthly board meetings. As far as the Budget-to-Actual data, Vice President Edward determined that the other community colleges are doing this report quarterly or less, i.e., it does not need to take place every month. Another recommendation is that in-person meetings are held once a semester rotating to each campus with a hybrid option. Chair Schmalensee noted that these changes will make the monthly meetings more meaningful and valuable.

President

President Podell reported the following:

*The final NECHE report has been submitted, and the entire document with text regarding the nine standards appendices was distributed to the Board yesterday. A separate document with Standards I (Mission and Purposes), II (Planning and Evaluation) and III (Organization and Governance) was distributed to the Board afterwards, as these are most relevant sections for the Trustees, who are invited to dinner on April 6 and a meeting on April 7. The Board meeting on April 1 will focus on this visit. Trustee Negreli recalled the Board voting to arm the police back in 2019. President Podell explained there had been delays after that vote (the officers' union initially objected to psychological testing and COVID meant few people were on campus). After the murder of George Floyd, the Board asked the administration to conduct a new survey of employees and students. Results of the new survey indicated even greater support for arming the police than the 2018 survey. The officers were consequently armed in summer 2024.

*Three weeks ago, college presidents and heads of K-12 schools received a "Dear Colleague" letter from the U.S. Department of Education saying that, within the next two weeks, they must stop all DEI (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion) activities, under penalty of losing federal financial support. Although the letter does not have the weight of law, it does have to be taken seriously, and the Massachusetts community colleges are receiving guidance from the Attorney General, as they are state schools, funded by the state and the taxpayers of Massachusetts and governed by Massachusetts state law. The Attorney General's Office has indicated Massachusetts is committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion, and is part of a lawsuit against this executive order than underlies the Dear Colleague letter. MassBay remains committed to the College's mission and values, as articulated on our website. This has been communicated to the community in a recent Town Hall. There is considerable anxiety in higher education, particularly about the possibility of losing federal dollars – in particular, federal financial aid. The College also receives federal dollars through different kinds of grants. For example, it has had a grant from the US Department of Commerce to help build the Framingham campus, NSF (National Science Foundation) grants in STEM to promote the recruitment of minorities and women into STEM professions, and a Title III grant to help promote student success. Fortunately, most of MassBay's federal grants are completed or nearing an end. MassBay will follow closely the guidance we receive from the Governor and the Attorney General.

Chair Schmalensee noted that the state is saying one thing and the federal government is saying another, and the College requires funding and support from both of them, so is caught between the two. In the end, MassBay is a state agency, governed by the laws of the state of Massachusetts.

President Podell noted that the campus community was alarmed by the letter and had already been concerned about the possibility of ICE coming on campus to take away undocumented students. People appear calmer now inasmuch as nothing has happened at MassBay or any of the other community colleges in Massachusetts, to his knowledge.

*The new website launched on February 26. It is much more attractive, functional, and refreshing. He thanked Vice President Solomon and his team for all of their work on this.

*Secretary Tutwiler will be this year's Commencement speaker. He is an inspiring speaker for MassBay's graduates.

BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS

***Finance and Administration Committee**

Committee Chair Matt Kahn reported he is pleased about the change in the Full Board meeting agendas de-emphasizing the finance reports, which are discussed in depth during the Finance and Administration Committee meetings.

Finance Items

Vice President Edward reported the following:

FY2025 Budget vs. Actual Comparison Report

There is a positive variance of \$968,000 due to better performance on revenues and expenses compared to the projected budget.

Revenues – There is a positive variance of \$485,000. Tuition and Fees is better than budgeted by \$426,000 because enrollment is higher than the 16% budgeted increase. In addition, there is a positive variance on the contracts, commission, and other revenue line. The variance is due to better than projected returns on MMDT and bookstore commissions exceeding projections.

Expenses – There are variances in various lines, due mainly to timing, and an overall favorable variance of approximately \$501,000.

Chair Schmalensee noted how well managed MassBay's finances have been.

MOTION: Trustee Povich moved to approve the Budget to Actual report, and Trustee Choate seconded the motion.

The motion passed via the following roll call vote: Trustee Choate – YES; Trustee Hidalgo – YES; Trustee Kahn – YES; Trustee Lish – YES; Trustee Negreli – YES; Trustee Povich – YES; Trustee Schmalensee – YES; Trustee Vincent – YES

Vice President Edward described the look and content of a new Finance report for the Full Board meetings. Previously, the monthly statement from MMDT, cash balances over the last five years, and an extensive cash report have been presented. The appendix detailing these items will still be included, but the new report will be more concise, combining Investments, Cash, and Student Accounts Receivable reporting into one page. The Investment report will show the beginning balance from FY2023 of \$20 million and the withdrawals made every year, which total 3.5% yearly. The investment performance will be compared to the policy index and performance of the S&P 500 index. The Cash and Student Receivable reports will show the change year-to-year and month-to-month.

Investment Update

As of the end of January, the balance was \$29.85 million. The investments earned 2.5% percent in January after losing 3 % in December. The current balance is \$29.7 million, and the earnings for the month of March is -.7 %.

Committee Chair Kahn reported that MassBay has 65 % exposure to the stock market and 35% not, so stock market gyrations do not impact the College dollar for dollar. It will be a bumpy ride coming up.

Contracts Report

There is one \$108,260 contract for Ashley McGraw to do a schematic design for the soccer field.

Kitchen Renovation Project

There are no updates to the kitchen renovation project.

Personnel Items

Vice President Edward reported the following:

Personnel Actions Report

There are three employees in new roles, as follows:

*Joanna Herrera moved into a new role as an English faculty member, reporting to the Dean of Humanities and Social Sciences.

*Jennifer McAndrew moved into a new role as Associate Director of Enrollment Management, reporting to the Vice President for Enrollment Management.

*Sharon Williams moved into a new role as Buyer in the Office of Procurement and Business Operations, reporting to the Director of Procurement and Business Operations.

Recruitment Report

The Recruitment Report lists 31 open positions. Eleven are faculty positions, of which three have been filled, including English, Human Services, and Psychology. The Risk Compliance Analyst is close to being filled, and progress is being made on the others.

***Nominations and Bylaws**

Committee Chair Povich reported that the Nominations and Bylaws Committee met last week. The committee will be reviewing the current Bylaws during the next few months, and a revised version will be shared with the Board at an upcoming meeting. The committee is also looking at recommendations for new Trustees to send to the Public Education Nominating Council (PENC). Trustee Vincent will share information for a potential candidate.

***Student Success**

Trustee Vincent reported that updates on the early outcomes from students leveraging the MassReconnect and MassEducate programs were given at the February 11 Student Success Committee meeting. Trustee Vincent then turned over the report to Vice President and Provost Jackson, Vice President Slavin, and Associate Dean Gildae.

SPECIAL REPORT

Free Community College

Vice President and Provost Jackson, Vice President Slavin, and Associate Dean Gildae presented a Powerpoint (attached) on *Free Community College: MassReconnect & MassEducate Preliminary Outcomes*, including the following topics:

- *MassReconnect and MassEducate
- *Free Community College for Eligible MA Residents
- *What is Free Community College?
- *MassReconnect and MassEducate are Forms of State Financial Aid
- *Who is Eligible?
- *MassReconnect and MassEducate Headcount
- *Race/Ethnicity and Gender of Free Community College Students
- *Course Success Rates – MassReconnect
- *Course Success Rate – MassEducate Fall 2024
- *Fall 2023 to Fall 2024 Retention
- *Credits Attempted
- *Enrollment Increase for Degree-Seeking Students
- *% Change in Black and Hispanic/Latino Enrollment
- *Enrollment by Income Level
- *Headcount Change by Top Major
- *Top Fields by Predicted Growth by Standard Occupational Classification (SOC)

President Podell provided two additional updates. The first explained how the state is paying for these programs, which is through the Fair Share Act revenue, which is the millionaire's tax revenue, which is reserved for education and transportation. Some of the education portion of this money has been used to fund MassEducate and MassReconnect. The second is that four of our academic programs are not covered under either program because they are not covered by Pell grants as they are short term programs, which Pell does not cover, even though they are credit bearing. This is something MassBay hopes the federal government will change. For a while it seemed both parties in Washington were interested in extending Pell to short term programs, but now people are somewhat pessimistic, given that the administration is trying to close budget gaps.

Vice President Solomon reported that every recent advertisement for the College has mentioned free community college. Instead of spending more money, the messaging was changed. The College looks forward to the programs receiving continued funding in the upcoming budget and beyond. Free community college is in the Governor's "House One" budget that she submitted several weeks ago, and it is hoped this will be in the House and Senate budgets as well.

ENROLLMENT REPORT

Vice President Slavin reported that summer registration opened yesterday, and sessions start beginning in May. Fall registration starts soon. Both summer and fall semester applications are up. Advisors are currently meeting with students attending in the summer. An event with Guidance Counselors will be held on March 14 in Ashland. The Spring Open House is on May 3.

DASHBOARD REPORT

Associate Dean Gildae reported the following:

- *Admissions – Figure 1.7 has been updated with Fall 2024 destinations. As with the prior fall, 60% of accepted

applicants had no Fall 2024 enrollment record anywhere. Among those who did not enroll at MassBay (26% of those accepted), the highest number went to other Massachusetts community colleges: Bunker Hill (n=161), Quinsigamond (n=91), Middlesex (n=53), or Massasoit (n=53). All of the top ten institutions for Fall 2024 were Massachusetts public colleges or universities.

*Enrollment - Figure 2.8 has been updated to reflect the recent IPEDS Student Financial Aid Survey data. There was a slight increase in the percentage of first-time, full-time students awarded state or federal financial aid when compared to the prior year (60% compared with 56%). The rate of Pell Grant awards remained steady at 42%. And the rate of federal student loans awarded continued the downward trend, 14% in academic year 2023-2024 compared with 25% five years prior in academic year 2019-2020.

*Outcomes –Figure 4.4 has been updated to include the Fall 2021 cohort for both full-time and part-time students. The three year outcome success rates for part-time students held steady at 52% compared with last year, representing an increase over prior cohorts. Full-time students reflect an increase to 60%, marking the highest rate among recent cohorts. The largest increase was found in associate’s degree earned (an increase from 14% to 18%).

*Finance, Grants & Fundraising – Figures 7.3 and 7.4 have been updated to include data from fiscal year 2024. New Grants totaled more than \$7 million with \$374,420 in indirect costs (figure 7.3). MassBay Foundation Fundraising totaled \$765,577 with approximately \$100,000 of that allocated for the Capital Campaign (figure 7.4).

FOUNDATION AND CAPITAL CAMPAIGN REPORTS

Foundation Board member Kennedy reported the following:

*The Boston Marathon is coming up, and Trustee Hidalgo will be representing MassBay to raise funds for the Student Hunger initiative. On his [web page](#) he shares the meaningful quote “If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.” Trustees were thanked for their donations.

*The summer scholarship application process will open soon, and the results will be shared later this spring.

*The Foundation Board is looking for new members as some current members’ terms are soon ending.

Capital Campaign Director Borg reported the campaign team is laying the groundwork for the new Student-Cyber Center campaign, working with volunteers, community leaders, and Trustees to identify strong individual, corporate, and foundation prospects. Connections are also being made with top donors from the previous campaign, and materials to share with prospects are being developed.

COMMUNICATIONS

Reports from Public Safety

Chief DiBlasi reported that the December 2024, January 2025, and February 2025, Clery & National Incident Based Reporting System (NIBRS) comparison to previous years show all zeros.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Trustee Povich moved to adjourn the meeting, and Trustee Lish seconded the motion.

The motion passed via the following roll call vote: Trustee Choate – YES; Trustee Kahn – YES; Trustee Lish – YES; Trustee Negreli – YES; Trustee Povich – YES; Trustee Schmalensee – YES; Trustee Vincent - YES

The meeting adjourned at 9:22 am.



4/1/25



4/1/25

David Podell, President
MassBay Community College

Date

Ilissa Povich, Chair
MassBay Board of Trustees

Date

DOCUMENTS INCLUDED IN BINDER

- *February 4, 2025, meeting minutes
- *FY2025 Budget Vs. Actual Comparison report
- *Student Accounts Receivable and Cash & Investment Comparison reports
- *Cash Position and Investment Position by Month
- *Contracts
- *Kitchen Renovation Project
- *Personnel Actions report
- *Recruitment report
- *Dashboard report
- *Free Community College presentation
- *Reports from Public Safety